

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8547

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, OCLR, GR

SUBJECT: OPERATING RESTRICTION ON US FORCES

REFS: (A) ATHENS 6842; (B) STATE 253615 (NOTAL);

(C) ATHENS 7254

1. SUMMARY: THERE HAS BEEN A RELAXATION AROUND THE EDGES OF THE PROBLEM OF FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS, ALTHOUGH ESSENTIAL PROBLEM OF CLOSED AIRSPACE IN AEGEAN REMAINS. SHIP VISITS AT OUR RECOMMENDATION CONTINUE TO BE LIMITED IN ATHENS AREA TO HOMEPORTED SHIPS, BUT WE FORESEE POSSIBILITY OF RESUMPTION SOON OF VISITS BY SMALLER UNITS TO OUTLYING PORTS. FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE, AIRCRAFT CARRIER VISITS WOULD INCUR TOO GREAT RISK OF ADVERSE GREEK REACTION. END SUMMARY.

2. RESTRICTIONS OF FLIGHT OPERATIONS HAVE BEEN RELAXED SOMEWHAT COMPARED WITH THOSE DESCRIBED PARA 2, REF A, AS
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FOLLOWS: (A) ATHENAI AB STILL IS ONLY AIRFIELD OPEN FOR

NORMAL US FLIGHT OPERATIONS, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOW ALLOWED TO LIST IRAKLION AND THESSALONIKI AS BONA FIDE WEATHER ALTERNATES; (B) BEGINNING RECENTLY MEDEVAC FLIGHTS PERMITTED TO USE IRAKLION; (C) SINCE INTERVENTION BY CHIEF JUSMAGG WITH CINCHELFOR, LOCALLY-BASED AIRCRAFT OF 7206TH AB GRP, JUSMAGG, AND USDAO ARE PERMITTED TO CONDUCT LOCAL TRAINING FLIGHTS, ALTHOUGH, EXCEPT FOR ATHENAI AB, ONLY THESSALONIKI AND IRAKLION AIRFIELDS MAY BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE; (D) HELICOPTERS ASSIGNED TO 558TH ARTY GRP ARE RESTRICTED TO TRAINING FLIGHTS IN ATHENS AREA, THUS CONTINUING FOR TIME BEING TO LIMIT COMMAND VISITS TO GROUND TRANSPORTATION; (E) FLIGHTS OF RC-135 AIRCRAFT OF 68TH STRATEGIC WING CONTINUE IN RELATIVELY UNINHIBITED FASHION UTILIZING ASSIGNED AIR CORRIDORS OUT OF AND INTO ATHENS FIR. NO SUCH FLIGHTS ARE BEING PERMITTED WHICH WOULD ENTAIL OPENING OF CURRENTLY CLOSED AIR CORRIDORS WITHIN ATHENS FIR; (F) HAF REQUIRES CONFIRMED DIPLOMATIC CLERARANCE FOR OVERFLIGHTS/LANDINGS AND REQUESTS REQUIRED MINIMUM OF SIX HOURS IN ADVANCE; (G) HAF SEEMS TO HAVE ABANDONED EARLIER PRACTICE OF TURNING BACK FLIGHTS WHOSE CLEARANCE NOT CONFIRMED; (H) SINCE WE SET FORTH OUR POSITION IN NOTE TO FONOFF, AS REPORTED REF C, WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED ANY INDICATION OF WHAT GOG POSITION MIGHT NOW BE RE CARRIER AIR OPERATIONS WITHIN ATHENS FIR. CARRIER AIR OPERATIONS CONTINUE TO BE CONDUCTED WITHIN ATHENS FIR SOUTH OF PELOPONNESUS AND CRETE; (I) SOUDA AB IS STILL CLOSED TO ALL US AIRCRAFT EXCEPT OCCASIONAL C-130 MOVEMENT OF US UNITS UTILIZING NAMFI.

3. CHIEF OF ARTILLERY, HAC, INFORMED CO558TH ARTY GRP SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT, AS PROVIDED IN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS HA WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT SAS UNITS, AS ALWAYS. HOWEVER, HA NOT PREPARED TO RESUME JOINT TRAINING. AS NOTED ABOVE, 558TH ARTY GRP HELICOPTERS STILL NOT PERMITTED FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WHICH THEY EXERCISED PRIOR TO SUMMER 1974

4. AS RESULT OF OUR JUDGMENT OF LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES, VISITS TO GREEK PORTS BY US NAVY UNITS HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO USE OF ELEFSIS PIER BY HOMEPORTED DESTROYER SQUADRON AND
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OCCASIONAL SHIP SUPPORTING THIS SQUADRON. RESUMPTION OF SHIP VISITS BY AIRCRAFT CARRIER ANY PLACE IN GREECE OR BY ANY SHIP TO PHALERON BAY WOULD BE PREMATURE AT THIS TIME. WE BELEIVE THAT VISITS BY SMALLER UNITS TO CERTAIN OUTLYING PORTS WOULD BE WORTH ATTEMPTING. PHIBLEX 5-75 CANCELLED AT OUR REQUEST BECAUSE IT COINCIDED WITH LAST FEW DAYS OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND LIKELIHOOD, IN VIEW OF GREEK ACTION CANCELLING PHIBLEX 3-75, THAT GOG WOULD TAKE

SIMILAR ACTION.
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